

# Developing Effective Teachers' Evaluation System: A Study of Educational Institutions in Karachi

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## ABSTRACT

*The years of research has proven that nothing educational institutions can do for their students more than giving them effective teachers. The objective of this research is to develop effective evaluation system for education Institutes in Karachi. In order to collect data various reports, international surveys and faculty evaluation systems were studied. Faculty In charge and program managers were interviewed to get their opinion on guidelines for developing faculty evaluation. Teachers were consulted on what areas assessment should be based. Moreover, Students feedback on teacher's performance was collected. Results reveal that students' feedback, colleagues review, and teacher's self-reflection method will be significant in designing effective evaluation system. Study recommends that a teacher's evaluation system should allocate appropriate weight*

*age to students' feedback, peer review and standards set by institute.*

**Keywords:** Faculty, evaluation, feedback, performance, teachers, education.

## INTRODUCTION

Nearly everyone agrees that great teachers are critical to student success and that our educational institutions have not done nearly enough to evaluate teachers accurately and use this information to improve educational quality. We cannot address any of these issues without better teacher evaluation systems. Evaluations should provide all teachers with regular feedback that help them grow as professionals, no matter how long they have been in the classroom. Evaluations should give educational institutions the information they need to build the strongest possible instructional teams, and help districts hold school leaders accountable for supporting

each teacher's development. Most importantly, they should focus everyone in a school system, from teachers to the superintendent, on what matters most: keeping every student on track to graduate from high school ready for success in college or a career.

Evaluations should do all of these things, but in most cases, they don't even come close. Instead, they are typically perfunctory compliance exercises that rate all teachers "good" or "great" and yield little useful information. As Secretary of Education Arne Duncan noted in a summer 2010 speech, "our system of teacher evaluation... frustrates teachers who feel that their good work goes unrecognized and ignores other teachers who would benefit from additional support."

The crucial question now facing education leaders is, "How?" How can they avoid the pitfalls of evaluation systems? How can they create evaluations that become useful tools for teachers that help push students to new heights? What can they learn from the institutes and universities that are making real progress? This guide is intended to address these critical questions. We hope to provide a blueprint for rigorous, fair and credible

teacher evaluation systems centered on student outcomes.

Just as there is no simple system for evaluating the quality of faculty research, there is no simple system for evaluating the quality of faculty teaching. However, by thinking carefully about the purposes of evaluation, and by crafting multiple methods of evaluation that suit those purposes, one can devise evaluation systems that are reliable, valid, and fair. Equally important, the process of discussing and crafting evaluation systems focuses attention on the practice of good teaching and helps to create a culture in which teaching is highly valued.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Years of research have proven that nothing educational institutions can do for their students more than giving them effective teachers. Effective teachers not only deliver education but also develop vision among their pupils. A few years with effective teachers can put even the most disadvantaged students on the path to success. A few years with ineffective teachers can deal students an academic blow from which they may never recover.

“The effect of increases in teacher quality swamps the impact of any other educational investment, such as reductions in class size.”

*Gold Haber, 2009*

“More can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor.” *Wright, Horn and Sanders, 1997*

“Having a top-quartile teacher rather than a bottom-quartile teacher four years in a row could be enough to close the black- hite test score gap.” *Gordon, Kane and Staiger, 2006*

“Having a high-quality teacher throughout elementary school can substantially offset or even eliminate the disadvantage of low socio-economic background.” *Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2002*

Research has also shown that the best predictor of a teacher’s effectiveness is his or her past success in the classroom. Most other factors pale in comparison, including a teacher’s preparation route, advanced degrees, and even experience level (after the first few years). The lesson is clear: to ensure that every child learns from the most effective teachers possible, educational institutions must be able to gauge their teachers’ performance fairly and accurately. Jordan, Mendro, and Weerasinghe, *The Effects of*

*Teachers on Longitudinal Student Achievement*, 1997

Teachers’ Performance Evaluation in HEIs  
Higher education plays an important role in our societies. It educates students for work or for academic and research performance. Yet, this is not its only role. It also represents the cornerstone for the democratization, growth and wellbeing of our societies (Razavi, 2007). Considering the universalizing era and the change in the universities' mission and a move towards high-quality and organizational excellence, the existing indicators of evaluation which are mainly goal-oriented and introspective, are no more indicative of the evaluation of the universities; therefore, by using the modern indicators of universal evaluation which are derived from organizational excellence models, it is possible to walk towards the development of a society and the effectiveness of universities consistent with national and international evolutions (Ghurchian et al., 2010).

Over the last few years, a great emphasis has been laid upon faculty development programs within and or outside the higher education institutions (Usmani, 2008).

Considering Teachers' Evaluation as an essential outset to determine the performance of each and every faculty member, many institutions, whether public or private, have adopted various parameters to be used as performance measures to serve the desired purpose (Amin & Khan, 2009; Leffter & Puja, 2010). The rigorous evaluation of teaching is one of the most significant characteristics of a healthy and conducive 'teaching environment' that leads to remarkable improvements in teaching practices (Aslam, 2011). Performance management is or should be an eminently practical process closely aligned with other aspects of general management, and does not sit easily as an isolated subject for academic scrutiny. In practice, such separation does not seem to make sense, since both performance management and quality enhancement ultimately rely on human resource interventions, and both chase the goal of delivering better services (Martinez, 2000). Before the development of any system for university performance Amin & Khan (2009). The performance appraisal system plays several roles here. First, it is the mechanism that helps the organization highlight and communicate the small number of critically important behaviors and skills against which

every single employee will be assessed. In addition, creating a new performance appraisal system may help force the organization to define just what attributes or factors are actually at the organization's *core*. Finally, the appraisal system can guarantee that these competencies are fully understood and institutionalized (Aslam, 2011).

## RESEARCH METHOD

The study uses qualitative research method and collected data using survey research. Reports, international surveys and various faculty evaluation systems were studied to accumulate information. Faculty coordinators and program managers were interviewed to get their opinion on guidelines for developing faculty evaluation. Teachers were consulted on what areas assessment should be based. Moreover, Students' feedback on teachers' performance was collected via online feedback forms.

## ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Guidelines for teaching evaluation. Some principles suggested by experts for Teaching Evaluation

### 1. Multiple Methods

The most important consideration in teaching

evaluation, both for improvement purposes and for personnel decisions, is the use of multiple methods of teaching evaluation involving multiple sources of data.

## **2. Faculty, Departmental and School Responsibilities**

To ensure that the evaluation system adopted is credible and acceptable, faculty members must have a strong hand in its development. Before departments and educational institutions adopt teaching evaluation systems, the faculty members should determine their criteria for effective teaching. Departments and educational institutions can then take responsibility for developing their own evaluation methods and evaluation criteria. Since different disciplines require different methods and settings for instruction, they require different methods and criteria for evaluation. This is also true for interdisciplinary instruction. Teaching evaluation systems can be flexible to accommodate diversity in instructional methods (e.g., lecture, discussion, lab, case study, small group interaction, practicum, studio, field work, research work, etc.). To promote compatibility within the university, standards should be reviewed, understood,

and accepted by all groups involved in the promotion and tenure review process.

## **3. Individualizing teaching evaluation**

Effective teaching evaluation must be individualized. A uniform system discriminates against some individuals, so a plan sensitive to individual variation should be developed. A faculty member should provide information about his/her contributions and accomplishments as a teacher on a longitudinal basis over his/her teaching career. Consideration can then be given to changes in emphasis and interest that will naturally occur in an academic career.

What may be assessed?  
Teaching evaluation has as its central element the assessment of the quality of classroom instruction. Since teaching includes activities broader than classroom instruction, evaluation of teaching must assess more than classroom performance.

## **SOME SOURCES OF DATA FOR EVALUATING TEACHING**

Students, Colleagues, and Self-Reflection

### **1. Students: Multiple Methods**

**End-of-course rating forms and written comments:** Generally, students are able to report on the extent to which a teacher

appears prepared for class sessions, communicates clearly, stimulates interest, and demonstrates enthusiasm and respect for students; research shows that student responses on these dimensions are valid and reliable. Generally, students are less able to judge the knowledge of the instructor or scholarly content and currency of a course.

When using student ratings for personnel decisions and teaching improvement, institutions often include the following among their guidelines:

1. Questions about instructors and courses should be relevant. They should fit the instructors and courses being evaluated.
2. Multiple sets of ratings of faculty courses over time should be considered; personnel decisions should be influenced only by ratings from several courses over several terms.
3. Because global ratings of the teacher or course tend to correlate higher with student learning than do more specific items, personnel decisions should rely more on global items (e.g., "Overall, this is an excellent course." "Overall, the instructor is an excellent teacher.").
4. Comparative data (such as departmental, school, or institutional norms) should be provided so that individual evaluations can be interpreted within a meaningful context. For example, information about course characteristics (e.g., disciplinary field, class size, required/elective, lower division/upper division, etc.) should be considered when reviewing evaluation results.
5. When results from student evaluation forms are used in personnel decisions, it is essential that standardized procedures for administering the forms be followed. Procedures should indicate who will distribute, collect and return questionnaires; when the evaluations should take place; and when the evaluation results will be made available.
6. Student rating results should be considered in personnel decisions only when most of the students in a class have completed the surveys.
7. The use of optional items chosen by the instructor customizes and makes the forms more useful for teaching improvement purposes.
8. Rating forms should include open-ended questions so that students can write their own comments. Written comments are particularly helpful in improving classroom performance.
9. A knowledgeable colleague or teaching improvement consultant should be available to discuss evaluation results with individuals



in order to help them interpret scores, provide encouragement, and suggest teaching improvement strategies.

## **FOCUS-GROUP INTERVIEWS, EXIT INTERVIEWS, AND SURVEYS OF STUDENTS**

Focus-group interviews and "exit interviews" may be used to provide information about faculty members and courses for personnel decisions and to strengthen a department's program. Interviews can provide a depth and breadth of information, elicit unanticipated responses, and allow for clarification of student satisfaction and concerns. Focus-group interviews, exit interviews, and surveys of graduating students are especially helpful in strengthening a department's program.

## **MID-COURSE AND PERIODIC STUDENT FEEDBACK**

Feedback from students throughout the term is particularly helpful for teaching improvement purposes. Faculty may ask students to provide informal assessments of their teaching effectiveness at mid-semester by means of focus-group interviews with teaching consultants or through the use of student rating forms, especially ones that include open-ended questions. Throughout

the term, faculty also may invite students to comment informally -- perhaps by e-mail or by writing short evaluations at the end of a class period. Mid-course feedback should not be used for summative evaluation unless an instructor chooses to include the feedback in a teaching dossier.

## **EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING**

Throughout the term, faculty members may act as "classroom researchers," gathering measures of student learning in order to improve their teaching. Faculty may also wish to provide examples of student learning as evidence of their teaching effectiveness for personnel decisions.

### **2. Colleagues: Peer Review**

In most institutions, faculty and administrators have relied on student ratings of teaching effectiveness for teaching improvement purposes and for personnel decisions. Now, however, surveys about how teaching is evaluated on college and university campuses demonstrate an increase in use of faculty colleagues as raters of teaching effectiveness. Colleague review of teaching can play as significant a role as does peer evaluation of research.

Colleagues who have expertise in the discipline being taught and training in what to observe can provide important evaluative information through classroom visits and review of course materials and instructional contributions. For a faculty member engaged in interdisciplinary instruction, evaluation may involve colleagues with expertise in similar interdisciplinary instruction and/or with expertise in each of the individual disciplines represented by the faculty member.

#### **Evaluation of classroom teaching:**

Colleagues can provide important evaluative information through classroom visits. In particular, a colleague's observation of such aspects of teaching as appropriateness of materials and methods, breadth and depth of material covered, the relation of such material to the syllabus and goals of the course, and incorporation of recent developments in the discipline can offer a more informed appraisal of the instructor's mastery of content than can students' perceptions. There is consensus that peer observation has enjoyed more success as a strategy for teaching improvement than for personnel decisions. When used for personnel decisions, it is important to have explicit criteria by which colleagues make evaluations. A standardized observation form

will yield systematic and comparable data, especially if participating faculty are trained in what and how to observe. The evaluation process is enhanced when, prior to classroom visits, colleagues review the syllabus and course-related materials and discuss course goals and class objectives with the instructor.

**Evaluation of course materials:** Colleagues can evaluate course materials, such as syllabi, textbooks, handouts, assignments, graded exams, graded papers, etc. In the visual and performing arts, colleagues may evaluate faculty-directed art exhibits, theater and dance productions, musical ensembles, and individual performances when these activities are directly related to a faculty member's instructional activities. Examination by colleagues offers several advantages: It properly uses faculty expertise, can be done in a reasonable period of time, and can be done anonymously (just as is done with peer review of research). It is also appealing because it can be used for both personnel decisions and for teaching improvement purposes.

#### **Evaluation of instructional contributions:**

Colleagues may be in the most advantageous position to evaluate such teaching-related activities as curriculum development,



supervision of student research, participation in colleagues' and teaching assistants' teaching development, articles on teaching in disciplinary journals and other publications, and authorship of textbooks and other instructional materials.

### **3. Self Reflection: Teaching Dossiers**

The development of a teaching dossier (or portfolio) is a method that allows individuals to collect and display multiple sources of information regarding their teaching effectiveness for examination by others. It contributes both to sound personnel decisions and to the professional development of individual faculty members.

A dossier is a "factual description of a professor's major strengths and teaching achievements. The purpose of the dossier will drive decisions about format and content. The purpose will also guide decisions about what materials will be reviewed and by whom. There is no single prescription for how a teaching dossier should be structured or what specific information it should contain. Each unit will need to decide what is important and relevant. Units might want to consider including information in the following three areas:

#### **The background of the faculty member:**

The dossier may contain reflective statements by the faculty member on the development of and changes in his or her teaching philosophy, strategies, and objectives; efforts to evaluate and improve teaching and changes resulting from having done so; ways in which he or she has kept up with the professional field in areas related to teaching performance; and his or her future teaching goals.

#### **The environment in which the faculty member works:**

For example, the faculty member may describe his or her current expectations regarding distribution of effort among teaching, research, and service activities; include a list of classes taught; discuss important details about these classes that may affect teaching, such as class size and the characteristics, abilities, and motivations of the students; and provide a list of other teaching-related responsibilities and accomplishments.

#### **Elements regarding the faculty member's teaching process:**

The faculty member may provide the following:

- a) samples of teaching materials, such as course syllabi, assignments, and videotapes of classroom teaching;

- b) samples of student learning, such as exams, papers, projects, slides of student work, etc.; and
- c) The faculty member's reflections about the samples of teaching and learning materials. For example, a faculty member may comment on the reasons for curricular revisions; innovations or experiments with teaching methods or course structure; how and why a particular course's syllabus has changed from one year to another; why specific exam questions were chosen or specific assignments suggested; and ways in which students are provided feedback on exams and assignments.

## CONCLUSION

An evaluation process must have meaningful implications, both positive and negative, in order to earn sustained support from teachers and institutions and to contribute to the systematic improvement of the teacher workforce. It should produce information that institutes can easily use in important decisions about teacher tenure, compensation, development, hiring, promotion and dismissal. This means that the results of evaluations must be accurate, clear and easy to interpret.

Some policymakers may support using evaluations only to reward excellent teachers, and not for more difficult decisions like training, layoff. But if teacher performance matters at all, it should matter for any significant decision that affects the quality of instruction students receive. As educational institutions seek to build and sustain strong instructional teams, a teacher's track record of success in the classroom should be paramount, not off-limits. Accountability for evaluation outcomes should not rest on the shoulders of teachers alone; the ability to identify, develop and keep talented teachers is arguably the most important priority of any institution.

Sources that can be used for data collection are students feedback, peer review and teachers reflection. These three sources help instructional managers to decide teachers' performance. Furthermore, it enables evaluator to determine the level of performance, loop holes and need for the training and support to improve teachers' performance. It is also necessary to select objective, relevant and consistent criteria for evaluation. In nut shell it can be said that in order to bring progress program /instruction managers need to evaluate teachers fairly,

consistently and accurately. While evaluations should always be a significant part of employment decisions, professional judgment must play a role, too. For example, the highest performing MIS teacher should not automatically be selected as an I.T in charge, regardless of his or her other qualities. Likewise, a teacher should not be summarily dismissed after a single negative classroom observation. Each incremental change in performance does not require an instant and significant reward or penalty. Performance develops gradually after number of evaluations.

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